Misc. N.O.Notes, 11/23/71

Ed Planer confirms ("absolutely") that Jesse Core was in the original Johann Rush footage that was preserved and viewed after the assassination. My earlier notes refer to Jesse's telling me about it.

I had bumped into Monk Zelden on the street with Jim Brown, saw him at least one other time before today and had another brief chat, and was with him three times today. I had a 1:00 p.m. lunch date with Garrison at the Plantation Room of the Roosevelt, for which Jim was late, so I sat with Monk until Jim came. Then, when he left, he came over to out table and invited me to his office when I finished, and when I had to leave there for another appointment, he gave me his home number, and I went there after supper. Most of our conversation dealt with the pinball cases. However, at lunch he told me these things of interest: that when Dean Andrews phoned him from the hospital to ask him to represent Oswald, he gave Monk the mother's phone. Monk does not know if he preserved that note, but he does recall making it. The certainly tends to validate Andrews' original story. And he also got a tip that Ruby was at the Ochsner clinic during the summer of 1963 for a cancer checkup which revealed that he did have one. When I told Jim this he said they also had gotten that report but could find no confirming record at the hospital. This does not necessarily mean that it had existed and had been destroyed, but that is not impossible. When I told Monk that one of Ruby's lawyers had been surprised at learning Ruby was sick at all, he found it unimpressive. Zelden, and experienced criminal lawyer who has spent a lifetime dealing with the most wretched types, insists the one thing that can't make sense is a Ruby killing Oswald out of compassion for the bereaved, and he agrees the only purpose served was to shut HO's mouth.

On the Garrison indictment(s), he simply can't understand the defense request for a change of venue from the area in which Garrison is the most popular single person. He finds the motion as made strange in that it was made by Wm Dymond alone, without similar motions by the others or their signing that one. They did agree and join in open court. Monk feels this indicates that the other defendants and their counsel learned about t is in the last minute only and acted without considered judgement. I can't understand the change of venue request, even if it is rigged to get before a sympathetic judge, for it is the jury, not the judge, which decides, and Monk agrees that there is only so much a judge can do. Best jury prospects would seem to be in N.O. I find myself wondering if they hope for a denial, one prospect I didn't discuss with Monk. It is not difficult to wonder about Dymond.

Monk had this account of his representation of Andrews in the perjury case: Andrews asked him to represent, he did a lengthy legal memorandum after research and concluded that of the two possibilities under local law, the wrong one had been used to indict Andrews and that, despite Andrews' HC testimony, he had not waived one of the three absolute immunities under local law, lawyer-client (doctor-patient and priest-confesser others). He therefore gave Andrews the memo, told him when he got before the grand jury to refuse to say anything under the privelege, and waited outside the grand-jury chambers for about 3 hrs. while Dean rambled on. If this was not too much, the next thing he knew was when he turned the TV news on at home and heard that Dean's lawyer was subpenaeing as I recall 37 witnesses, beginning with the governor (who was soon on the horn, Zelden knowing him well- and Monk feels that to this day he either doesn't believe Dck believes Monk's assurances that he had had nothing to do with it and didn't know of it until after it happened.However, this was too much, he told Dean to get another lawyer, and he asked the judge to be relieved. The judge refused (in chambers) and Zelden told him where to go and simply said he'd take the judge to court if not relieved. In court, the judge announced Zelden's withdrawal, asked Dean if he had new counsel and was assured "I have the best lawyer in New Orleans". The judge instructed the clerk to make it a matter of record and asked Dean to identify his new counsel for the record. "Dean A. Andrews, Jr.", Andrews said! When I discussed the personal affiars of the client of another lawyer he knows and we discussed that lawyer, I wondered how it came to pass that one lawyer represented so many of those in whom Garrison was interested, suggesting that there might have been federal help. Monk said that Le Coeur had assured him to the contrary and I replied that had it been done, the one person not to be informed had to be the federal attorney. He didn't dispute this.

Monk has done 8 chapters of a book on his life in court, the status of justice (he believes it impossible or unlikely for the poor and unpopular), titled Just-Us? One chapter has this title with the ? xed out.

For a reason not clear he asked me if I had seen a story out of Denver in the NYTimes in the past month, on the Mafia. He then was not certain it had appeared there. The reporter had been to see him. He said there had been a series of such stories in that Denver paper, the name of which he doesn't know.

I was late leaving his office, for that had been improvised and Jim had been late. DT had phoned and said she was coming. She waited in the motel office, there being no lobby. She said as soon as she left it that they had sort of pumped her about me, giving her the impression they consider me some kind of private investigator. I suspect that if this is true, she helped foster the opinion by calling and leaving no message several times in a single day, on several days, and once, I think, when I was in, when the calling party hung up.

Jim gave me an Offense Report of the Dallas police, of a disturbance at the Bledsoe home. He did not include the covering letter, which was one signing himself a former Dallas policeman.

John,

Jim's present janitor, with whom I had a long chat before anyone got in the office this a.m., told me he had been handyman at the Bourbon House for close to 20 years. He had been questioned closely about seeing Oswald there by someone on the staff, but did not recall it, and he thought the name Thornley was familiar. His is a quaint pictureof the B.H., a sort of home away from home where messages were accepted and passed, and where they had a better chance of reaching those for whom intended fast than if left at homes. It was at 700 Bourbon